



CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION FOR  
Marriage & Family Therapy

February 23rd, 2023

The Honorable Patrick Boyd Co-Chair  
The Honorable Herron Gaston, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Paul Cicarella, Ranking Member  
The Honorable Greg Howard, Ranking Member  
Public Safety and Security Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 3600  
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: SB 972:

Chairman Boyd, Chairman Gaston, Vice Chairman DiGiovancarlo, Vice Chairwoman Osten, Ranking Members Cicarella and Howard, and members of the Public Safety and Security Committee:

My name is Rebecca Ruitto , I am a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and Chair of the Connecticut Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (CTAMFT). I am a resident of Colchester and own a private mental health practice in West Hartford. I am writing on behalf of CTAMFT in support of SB 972: An Act Concerning Crisis Intervention Training for Police Officers and Collaboration Between Police Officers and Social Workers.

CTAMFT currently represents over 2,000 licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (MFTs) through-out Connecticut. Marriage and Family Therapists are employed in various clinical settings throughout the state, serving diverse mental health needs via: private outpatient treatment; community based and outreach programs; in-home services; school-based services; and agency inpatient and outpatient care, among others. Marriage and Family Therapists are specifically trained through a systemic lens, and have extensive training in treating individuals, couples, families and systems as problems arise.

Connecticut has continued to see an increase in mental health needs across Connecticut residents. Diagnoses on an upwards trend include anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, adjustment disorders, and substance use disorders. This trend has increased the need for support in the form of outpatient, school-based, and higher level of care options (in-home, intensive outpatient treatment, partial hospitalization, inpatient); as well as ongoing escalated needs involving additional systems (DCF, police, and court services).

Collaboration between police officers and mental health workers has been seen to be effective in risk management and crisis intervention across the country. Connecticut has six (6) licensed

mental health professions: Marriage and Family Therapists, Nurse Practitioners, Professional Counselors, Psychologists, Psychiatrists and Social Workers. Many of these different provider types are employed as crisis intervention specialists. CTAMFT urges the committee to be inclusive of all mental health providers capable of providing this collaboration, including MFTs.

CTAMFT is supportive of SB 972 and asks that you support SB 972 with inclusive mental health provider language. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

*Rebecca Ruitto, LMFT*

Rebecca Ruitto, LMFT  
Chair, CTAMFT